

and wildlife; allows for recreational activities on and in water; and requires control of point and nonpoint sources of pollution to supplement existing controls of pollution.

The National Estuary Program now boasts 28 estuaries in almost every coastal State around the country. Since 1987 the program has restored or protected 700,000 acres of coastal habitat. The EPA works with federal agencies, State and local governments, non-profit institutions, industry, and citizens to address an estuary's environmental problems. The program is a watershed approach in which all affected interests participate in creating solutions that balance environmental objectives with competing issues.

Estuaries support many commercial and other activities. The shipping industry relies on estuaries and is a large source of employment and an integral part of the national economy. Estuaries also provide great opportunities for tourism and recreation. Finally, coastal populations depend on clean water drawn from an estuary's freshwater tributaries to support public infrastructure such as drinking water and water supplies for industrial facilities, wastewater treatment plants, and irrigation.

Much of my congressional district lies within the Delaware Estuary Study Area, so I am intimately familiar with the importance of protecting this particular estuary. The Delaware Estuary has sustained a human population for thousands of years, but by the end of the 19th Century, increased population and industrialization had transformed much of the upper Estuary watershed. Fisheries were in decline due to pollution, and drinking water supplies were contaminated by pollution which caused outbreaks of typhoid and other diseases in urban areas. Both the industrialization and pollution of the water led to a dramatic decrease in the recreational use of the Delaware River. And it became less of a regional focal point as fewer people had direct contact with it.

By the mid-20th Century, even more pollution flowed into the Delaware Estuary, and the urban reach of the Delaware was one of the most polluted stretches of river in the world, with essentially zero dissolved oxygen in the water during the warmer months of the year.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, increased State, interstate, federal and public interest led to dramatic improvements in the Estuary's water quality. Today, with the assistance of the Estuary Program, the Delaware Estuary is cleaner than at any time in the last century. Over 90 percent of the Estuary meets swimmable and fishable goals of the Clean Water Act. Public access to the Estuary is increased as a result of public parks.

Seeing the rebirth of the Delaware Estuary as a valuable natural resource is certainly encouraging, and I am encouraged not just by the progress made

in the Delaware Estuary but in estuaries throughout the country. For this reason, I believe it is vitally important that we act quickly to reauthorize the National Estuary Program and allow this progress to continue.

Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN), the chairman of our subcommittee; and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), chairman of our committee, for their efforts and their leadership, and I urge all Members to support this important bill.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Sometimes some of the best and most important legislation that this Congress does comes to the floor without much fanfare and does not receive a lot of attention because it is non-controversial. This is such a bill. But I can tell the Members that it is a privilege for me, as chairman of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, to bring such vital legislation to this floor and urge its passage.

I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH), the sponsor, and I want to thank the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for her assistance and cooperation on this, and I especially want to thank the staff that has worked on this very important bill. I urge passage of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONNER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4731.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 4731.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING BOARD OF REGENTS OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TO CARRY OUT CONSTRUCTION AND RELATED ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF VERITAS ON KITT PEAK

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5105) to authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to carry out construction and related activities in support of the collaborative Very Energetic Radiation

Imaging Telescope Array System (VERITAS) project on Kitt Peak near Tucson, Arizona.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5105

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZING BOARD OF REGENTS OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TO CARRY OUT CONSTRUCTION AND RELATED ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF VERITAS ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY PROJECT.

The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to carry out construction and related activities in support of the collaborative Very Energetic Radiation Imaging Telescope Array System (VERITAS) project on Kitt Peak near Tucson, Arizona.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2005 to carry out section 1.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to begin this evening by congratulating the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia on the impending return of Major League Baseball to the Washington, D.C., area. I would only ask if she could use her considerable clout to get the new team located in the American League, and I could watch the Cleveland Indians play here in the Nation's Capital.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5105, introduced by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY), my good friend, authorizes site development and construction of support facilities for the VERITAS project at Kitt Peak National Observatory in Arizona.

I want to pause for a minute because this particular piece of legislation has been sort of a tug of war with our good friends in the Parliamentarian's Office and our good friends in the Committee on House Administration, together with the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. And I want to commend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY), chairman of the Committee on House Administration, for working with us. Those of us who love and enjoy the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure believe that this is a piece of legislation and this is a project that belongs solely within our jurisdiction. We have an artistic difference with some of our friends, and we have worked through that. So, again, I want to thank the parliamentarians and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) for getting us to this point this evening.

This project, carried out by the Smithsonian Institution in conjunction with nearly a dozen universities from the United States, U.K., Canada, and Ireland, the new telescopic array will